



How to hold your own swishing party

A swishing party is a great way to update your wardrobe; its fun and won't cost you a penny. You just swap your unwanted clothes with other people!

It's really easy to organise your own swishing party and it can be as big or small as you want; a small group of friends or a whole workplace! Community groups can also hold clothes swaps.



Planning

First of all choose a venue, think about how many people you are going to invite. Your lounge would be fine for a small group of friends, but a village hall or pub would better if you are expecting a lot of people.

Then choose your date!

Publicity

Now all you need to do is let people know when and where the party is and what they need to do, keep this simple and set the rules from the beginning. It's best to give people plenty of notice so that people have chance to sort through their wardrobe and find items to swap.

You could give personal invites to small groups of people, or advertise the event with posters and involve the press if you want a bigger party.

Social media is a great way of getting your swap out into the community; look for community notice boards and interested groups such as green groups and organisations.

How it works

You will need to decide how the swapping will work. You could develop some kind of swishing "currency" for example give one token per donated item and swappers then have to pay one token per item taken. You may want to "price" items depending on type and quality, although this then becomes more complicated.

It is easier if you ask people to drop off items in advance so that you have chance to hang them up ready for the event, although you can hang up as people bring the items, but you will need more helpers.

Depending on the size of your party and number of people attending, you need to consider where you will display the items, hanging rails are helpful or tables for shoes and bags.

On the day, set everything up, and don't let anyone take anything until the swish begins. You might want to display items in sizes for ladies, men and children for example. Once the swish opens, people are free to browse the items and choose what they want. They can then exchange their swishing "currency" for the items



Rules

You can set your own rules but these might help start you off:

How swishing works

1. Everyone must bring at least one item of quality clothing, shoes or accessories. One token will be issued per item.
2. Please drop off items to be swapped prior to the event: **Insert date, time, place**
3. As soon as the swish is declared open, everyone may choose what they want
4. No item may be claimed before the swish opens
5. Items should be "purchased" using your tokens, at the exit desk
6. Any items left over at the end of the swish will be donated to **insert charity name**. If you want to take your items back you will need to have spare tokens
7. If you have a set of scales it may be useful to weight all the clothing so that amount of saved CO² can be calculated. This is particularly helpful if you are interested in the environmental impact of reusing clothing and can be used for publicity purposes. The easiest way to calculate CO² savings is 1kg of clothing reused = 25kg of CO² saved.

Little helpers

You will need people to help before, during and after the event. If you are having a small party then this isn't so important.

After the event

You will probably have items left over after the event; you will need to decide what will happen to these items. An idea might be to give them to charity.

Other ideas

You could have wine and nibbles to make the swishing party go with a swing. Why not try a children's clothes swap or a school uniform swap at school?

Disclaimer

It's useful to have a disclaimer so that people don't cause issues if a button drops off or a seam rips after the swap. It also stops negative publicity about the swaps circulating on social media, particularly if you do them regularly.

A suggested disclaimer is: *"Persons taking part in a swishing party do so at their own risk. **Insert group name** accepts no responsibility for items swapped and gives no warranty as to the condition, suitability or provenance of any item swapped. Please take all reasonable measures to check the condition, suitability and provenance of any item swapped for your own protection. **Insert group name** accepts no liability for any claim or loss resulting from any transaction taking place at the Swishing party."*

Want to see one in action before deciding what to do?

Duckworth Worcestershire Trust run regular clothes swaps at the Pump House Environment Centre in Gheluvelt Park, Worcester. Visit their website www.dwt.org.uk or look on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/duckworthwt> for regular updates on the events.

